



February, 2009

To our Customers:

Impact of Drought on the Sweetwater Springs Water District Customers

We have had several calls wondering whether the mandatory rationing announced by the Sonoma County Water Agency applies to Sweetwater Springs water customers. The answer is no, not at this time.

The water rationing announced in the local media is for customers and contractors of the Sonoma County Water Agency (SCWA) which receives much of its water through releases from Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma, both of which have had their water supplies impacted by the recent dry weather and by regulatory restrictions. Sweetwater Springs Water District is not attached to the SCWA, is not a contractor of SCWA, nor does it receive water in any way from SCWA.

Sweetwater Springs Water District produces its water from wells in Guerneville and Monte Rio near the Russian River. The pumping level of the wells is approximately 50 feet below the surface of the river and thus the District's wells' aquifers should remain in good condition regardless of flow levels in the Russian River. The amount of water that the District diverts from its wells is relatively small compared to the overall flow of the River, even during low flow events.

Even though reductions in releases from local reservoirs should not affect Sweetwater Springs Water District well production, the region is in a drought and all water users should take care, particularly in these dry times, to use water wisely. Every drop we don't use is water that can remain in the river. To that end, we recommend the following measures:

- Consider the need for and/or reduce outside watering.
- Find and repair leaks on your property and in your house. In particular make certain toilets and the irrigation system are not leaking.
- Tune up your irrigation system. Check periodically to make certain the irrigation controller is operating properly.
- Use a broom, not a hose to clean hard surfaces.
- Use a bucket and a hose with an automatic shutoff nozzle when you wash your car, or take your car to a carwash.
- Cover pools and hot tubs to reduce evaporation.
- Run the dishwasher and clothes washer with full loads only.
- Prevent and report water waste.
- Consider replacing old water using appliances with new water saving and energy efficient appliances. Use low flow showerheads and faucet aerators.

During this dry period the District will be continuing its water main flushing program which is necessary to ensure high quality water throughout our system. The District will make every effort to make certain flushing is done as efficiently as possible and will be very abbreviated compared to prior years' efforts.